



MARAD FACT SHEET

The National Defense Reserve Fleet



America's Advocate for the Maritime Industry



James E. Caponiti
Associate Administrator for
National Security

William F. Trost, Director
Office of Ship Operations

Voice: (202) 366-1875
Fax: (202) 366-3954

Strategic Objective: Assure that sufficient sealift capability and intermodal transportation infrastructure exists to support vital homeland and national security interests.

Operation Enduring Freedom/Operation Iraqi Freedom: Forty (40) of 68 RRF vessels were activated including 30 Roll-on-roll-off ships, which carry wheeled and tracked vehicles. General Meyers, Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff, called the "civilian mariners...the unsung heroes of the merchant marine [who] are not just a part of history, they are a vital part of our joint force today." Maritime Administrator, Captain William G. Schubert, noted that "the US Merchant Marine are the defenders of the homeland by contributing to successful sealift missions during Operation Enduring Freedom/Iraqi Freedom." He noted that more than 5,000 mariners supported the war including more than 1,200 mariners on RRF ships and approximately 80 midshipmen from the US Merchant Marine Academy. The success of the RRF is the result of the partnership between MARAD, DOD, commercial Ship Managers and sea-going labor unions.

OFFICE OF SHIP OPERATIONS manages the National Defense Reserve Fleet (NDRF) and its surge component the Ready Reserve Force (RRF).

The National Defense Reserve Fleet (NDRF) was established under Section 11 of the Merchant Ship Sales Act of 1946 to serve as a reserve of ships for national defense and national emergencies. In 1950, the NDRF held 2,277 ships in lay-up but the fleet is now fewer than 300 ships.

Ready Reserve Force: The surge component of the NDRF. This force is comprised of ships that are kept in a heightened state of readiness. They can be activated within 4, 5, 10, or 20 days to meet surge sealift requirements in the event of military deployment. Ships are maintained in accordance with USCG Certification, ABS Class and other regulatory requirements, by commercial ship managers.

Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm: Seventy-nine (79) ships were deployed in the largest military cargo lift since World War II. It was in this operation that the concept of the RRF was proven.

Hurricane Mitch Relief: In November 1998, RRF vessels provided humanitarian relief to Central America.

Division of Ship Maintenance and Repair:

Sets policy and oversees the management of maintenance for Ready Reserve Force vessels and notifies USTRANSCOM of vessel readiness.

Provides oversight of the Ship Manager contracts and General Agency Agreements through which the management, personnel, maintenance, activation and operational services of US ship operating companies for RRF ships is provided.

Oversees the policy and management of School ship maintenance. Works directly with the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy and state maritime academies to assure school ships enhance midshipmen training.

Division of Reserve Fleet:

Ship Donation Program: oversees donations of vessels to memorial groups and supports them with ports.

Historic Artifact Loans: loans artifacts from obsolete ships to organizations for maritime awareness.

Coordinates training requests for vessels usually from DOD units, FBI, and other maritime groups.

Vessel Custody: Oversees long-term government berthing for ships at NDRF anchorages located at the James River, VA; Beaumont, TX; and Suisun Bay, CA.

Outporting: provides long-term layberthing for ROS RRF ships in various ports around the country via competitive contracting, lease or ownership.

Division of Operations Support:

Directs activation and operation of RRF vessels for military deployments, exercises, and training.

Force Protection – coordinates interagency efforts to implement force protection for ships and mariners deployed in hazardous areas, includes small arms, anti-terrorism, chemical/biological warfare (CBR-D), crew processing and when necessary, various required vaccinations.

Threat Alerts – advises the U.S. maritime community of shipping alerts through MARAD advisories.

Administers RRF compliance and training in oil spill/hazardous materials spill prevention.

Division of Logistic Support:

Identifies and initiates actions regarding major ship supply initiatives to improve RRF ship readiness.

Oversees the Supply Management Improvement Program to prioritize and focus ship supply actions.

Oversees ship supply overhauls: to date, more than 50% of the RRF fleet have had supply overhaul.

Performs audits of shipboard supply management effectiveness using Logistics Management Reviews (LMR).